

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 360 916

HE 026 654

AUTHOR Simpkins, Alice M.
TITLE The Paine College Comprehensive Assessment and Evaluation Plan: A Model for the Implementation of Institutional Effectiveness at a Small College. AIR 1993 Annual Forum Paper.
PUB DATE May 93
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented at the Annual Forum of the Association for Institutional Research (33rd, Chicago, IL, May 16-19, 1993).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Black Colleges; College Outcomes Assessment; Educational Assessment; Evaluation Methods; Higher Education; Institutional Evaluation; Institutional Research; Long Range Planning; *Organizational Effectiveness; *Private Colleges; *Program Evaluation; Program Implementation; *Self Evaluation (Groups)
IDENTIFIERS *AIR Forum; *Paine College GA

ABSTRACT

Paine College, a four-year liberal arts institution in Augusta, Georgia, serving mostly black students recently completed an assessment and evaluation plan aimed at all units of the college. The plan was developed by members of the Committee on Institutional Effectiveness and Research over 12 months and focuses on the school's primary mission to provide quality education. The committee chose a format based on responses to seven key issues: (1) what must be asserted? (2) who does the assessing? (3) when is assessment done? (4) what is the system of prioritization? (5) how do assessment results flow among units? (6) what provisions exist for feedback and use of results? and (7) how is the evaluation plan itself evaluated? Use of this structure allowed the plan to provide an over-arching framework for assessing the institution including determining educational and administrative outcomes and describing how the intended results would be achieved, evaluated, assessed, and utilized for institutional improvement. The plan was implemented by the committee and distributed to senior and mid-level administrators. Deadlines were announced and workshops were held. Data were collected on an ongoing basis. Detailed outcome goals were submitted by department heads for review. In its preliminary stages the plan's main impact has been campuswide involvement. (JB)

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The Paine College
Comprehensive Assessment and Evaluation Plan:
A Model for the
Implementation of Institutional Effectiveness
at a Small College

A PAPER

presented by

Alice M. Simpkins, Director
Institutional Effectiveness and Research
Paine College
Augusta, Georgia 30901-3182
(706) 821-8283

Wednesday, May 19, 1993
3:15 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.

The Association for Institutional Research
33rd Annual Forum
Chicago, Illinois

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for Management Research, Policy Analysis, and Planning

This paper was presented at the Thirty-Third Annual Forum of the Association for Institutional Research held at the Chicago Marriott Downtown, Chicago, Illinois, May 16-19, 1993. This paper was reviewed by the AIR Forum Publications Committee and was judged to be of high quality and of interest to others concerned with the research of higher education. It has therefore been selected to be included in the ERIC Collection of Forum Papers.

Jean Endo
Chair and Editor
Forum Publications
Editorial Advisory Committee

ABSTRACT

The *Paine College Comprehensive Assessment and Evaluation Plan* (CAEP or the *Plan*) is the guiding document for the evaluation of institutional effectiveness at the college. It defines the organizational scheme for the evaluation of all operations and outlines strategies for assessing the extent to which the mission is achieved. By May 1993, all units will have developed outcome statements and 12 units of the college will have been evaluated based on their defined outcomes. Development of the *Plan*, its first year of operation, problems, and solutions in its implementation form the basis for the presentation.

The Paine College
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INTRODUCTION

Paine College, a four-year liberal arts institution, located on 54 acres in Augusta, Georgia awards bachelor of arts and bachelor of science degrees in 13 majors. Seventy-seven percent of its 686 students are from the state of Georgia; almost three percent are foreign. Its faculty has been biracial almost since its founding while its student body has been and continues to be predominately black. Paine College is supported by the United Negro College Fund, the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church and The United Methodist Church. Under the auspices of the Board of Trustees, the President with four other senior line officers administers the affairs of the college.

Throughout its 111-year history, Paine College has been an effective and vital institution, using its resources and employing appropriate strategies and processes to fulfill its mission. The recently completed *Paine College Comprehensive Assessment and Evaluation Plan (CAEP or the Plan)*, is the overarching framework for assessing and evaluating all units of the college. The purpose of this paper is to describe the *Plan*, summarize implementation strategies, and highlight the potential impact on the institution.

The Paine College CAEP was developed by members of the Committee on Institutional Effectiveness and Research (CIER) over a twelve-month period in response to several "must" statements in the *Criteria* and a recommendation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools following the completion of the college's Institutional Self-Study in 1991. The CIER is chaired by the director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research, and is composed of chairs of each of the five academic divisions

in addition to representatives from educational support, student development, administrative processes, and the student body.

PHILOSOPHY OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Paine College's philosophy of institutional effectiveness is grounded in the belief that the institution's primary considerations must be the quality of education that it provides as well as the processes through which that education is imparted. The assessment of the college's effectiveness in providing that education involves a systematic, explicit, and documented comparison of institutional performance to institutional purpose. Thus, institutional effectiveness is measured by the extent to which Paine College fulfills its stated mission and the goals and objectives derived from it.

Paine College is committed to an excellent instructional program and directs its academic activities, including faculty development, proposal writing, and workshops, to that end. The college strives to instill confidence, self-esteem, and pride of heritage in students. They learn that the boundaries of achievement are neither defined nor prescribed by race, but by ability and perseverance. Thus, five postulations underlie the philosophy of effectiveness at Paine College:

1. Paine College is a teaching institution where quality and effectiveness of instruction are major foci.
2. A liberal arts education changes the whole student, and this transformation often eludes easy packaging, oversimplification, and measurement.
3. There must be a variety of indices to gauge institutional effectiveness.
4. Outcomes directed by value-added approaches to effectiveness must be a major focus.
5. While institutional planning is the responsibility of the Committee on Strategic Planning (CSP), and while a management system is an integrated approach to planning and evaluation, many formal and informal activities must coalesce into an effective planning whole.

THE PLAN

After reviewing various resources on planning, management, evaluation, assessment, and effectiveness, members of the CIER determined that the traditional strictly narrative format was inappropriate for Paine's CAEP. Thus, responses to the following seven questions define the components of the *Plan* and are summarized following the list.

1. What must be assessed?
2. Who does the assessing?
3. When is assessment done?
4. What is the system of prioritization?
5. How do assessment results flow among units?
6. What provisions are there for feedback and use of results?
7. How is the *Comprehensive Assessment and Evaluation Plan* evaluated?

What must be assessed?

Both objective and subjective data is assessed. Assessment is implemented at the unit level and monitored by the Committee on Strategic Planning (CSP) and the Committee on Institutional Effectiveness and Research (CIER). The head of each senior and mid-level administrative unit is responsible for guiding his or her members through the process of developing outcomes, whose main foci are defining expected results, accompanying assessment procedures, and linking them to the college's purpose. Forms IE1: Educational Outcome and IE2: Administrative Outcome are used to define all aspects of the expected results.

Who does the assessing?

Insuring institutional effectiveness is the responsibility of every member of the college community. Thus, everyone is involved in assessment and evaluation. Leaders are members of the Board of Trustees, the President, all senior administrators, division chairpersons, department coordinators, other budget supervisors, and all program heads, directors, and supervisors. The intent is that those persons closest to a specific area monitor the operations in the area and make necessary

changes for improvement. CIER's role is to oversee the assessment process. Figure 1 graphically depicts the various roles.

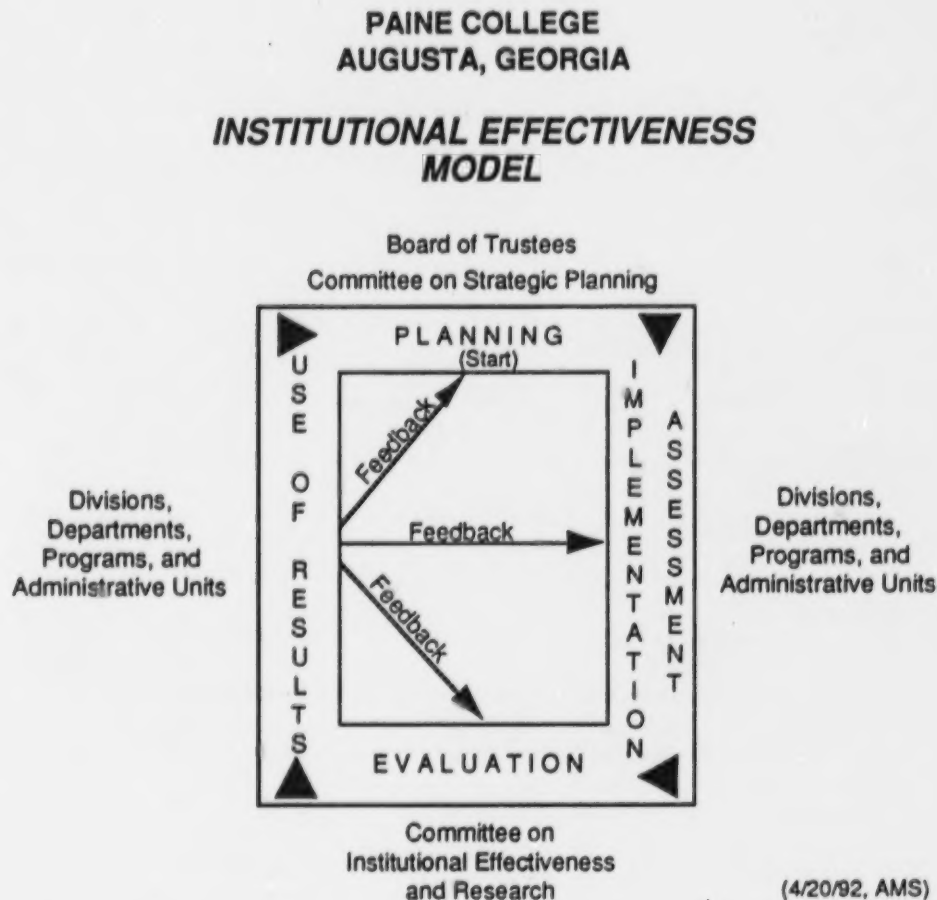


Figure 1 Institutional effectiveness model designed to show the college-wide relationships among the major activities and leaders in the implementation of the CAEP.

In Figure 1, implementation includes the development of educational or administrative outcomes. Assessment includes the identification and administration of evaluation procedures and the measurement of the extent to which the desired results as defined in the outcomes were obtained. Evaluation results are disseminated to the appropriate offices for use in planning and making

adjustments in programs and operations, and are coalesced into a formal annual report in the spring and a summative report every five years. This feedback of the results is indicated by arrows in the diagram.

When is assessment done?

The overall calendar for assessment is based on an academic year, since the primary consideration of institutional effectiveness is the quality of education that the college provides. Paine College uses two types of formal assessment—five- or ten-year summative evaluations and annual or other formative evaluations. The rotating schedule is given in the document in the section that describes the system of prioritization. Since this is the first year for the completion of summative evaluations, the period to be covered spans two instead of five years.

What is the system of prioritization?

The system of formal evaluation contained in this document is based on the need to complete reviews for external reporting sources while maintaining a sense of direction internally. Thus, while all offices or programs submit annual reports, not all are extensively evaluated each year. Components of academic affairs will be evaluated each year. Conceptually, all majors are evaluated prior to the division evaluation. Non-major components are evaluated during division assessments unless otherwise listed. Each senior level administrative area will be evaluated once during a five-year period. Other programs or administrative units will also be evaluated once during a five-year period. Based on current assessment efforts, a schedule for 1992 through 1997 appears in the *Plan* as Exhibit 2.

How do assessment results flow among units?

There is, at least nominally, a hierarchical system for the flow of information that follows a "chain-of-command" or "distributive" model which largely mirrors the college's organizational chart.

What provisions are there for feedback and use of results?

Provisions for feedback and use of results are explicitly stated in each outcome. Thus, the system for feedback and use of results is pro-active. A format for reporting annual and five-year assessment results appears as an appendix in the *Plan*.

How is the *Comprehensive Assessment and Evaluation Plan* evaluated?

This *Plan* is a dynamic document that will be evaluated annually in the fall and updated in the spring by members of the Committee on Institutional Effectiveness and Research (CIER). Outcomes created at the unit level and appended to this plan will be modified as indicated in each outcome. Reports detailing accomplishments at each level will be reviewed by CIER and recommendations made to the Committee on Strategic Planning for appropriate action and implementation.

Summary of the *Plan*

The *Comprehensive Assessment and Evaluation Plan* is the overarching framework for assessing and evaluating all units of the college. Detailed educational and administrative outcomes describe how the intended results will be achieved, evaluated, assessed, and utilized to make improvements in the college's programs, therefore producing more effective graduates. Completed outcomes are appended to the plan and reports of results are filed in appropriate offices.

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation has been facilitated by having the Committee on Institutional Effectiveness and Research meet every other week to plan activities and review and evaluate materials. The *Plan* was distributed in a workshop format to members of the Committee on Strategic Planning, whose membership includes all senior and 11 mid-level administrators. Plans for the year were discussed and everyone's role in the implementation of the *Plan* was discussed. To facilitate the completion of the outcomes, "five-year" reports, and committee operational procedures, three additional workshops were held. Deadlines were announced for the completion of all information. Data is collected on an on-going basis with the annual *Paine College Fact Book* and other resources providing much of the necessary baseline information.

Detailed educational and administrative outcomes have been developed for 1992-1993 by 23 of the original 48 heads who were to have submitted outcomes. Thirteen of the original 48 were collapsed into the requirements for their supervisors. Therefore, outcomes are expected from 35 individuals. Twelve sets or partial sets of outcomes are still outstanding. Thirteen department or program heads for

which outcomes had not been completed by the second deadline have been requested to complete them for 1993-1994 and submit them by the end of the semester. One person has complied with this request. It is expected that others will do so in the near future.

The Committee on Institutional Effectiveness and Research has been reviewing the outcomes from academic affairs since February, 1993. When blatant omissions or errors that suggest a lack of understanding of the content that is to be included have been noted, the outcome has been returned to the appropriate head for correction. During the summer, the review will continue. Plans are to submit reports summarizing the expected results and the progress toward achieving the results to the Committee on Strategic Planning as each administrative section (academic affairs, fiscal affairs, student services, and institutional advancement) is completed.

Faculty committees were to have created detailed operational procedures following the approval of the current *By-Laws of the Faculty*. Since this had not occurred, the committees were instructed to complete the operational procedures during this year instead of outcomes. Four committees out of 11 have submitted operational procedures to date. All others are editing their work and plan to meet the April 30th deadline. All procedures will be reviewed, revised, and subsequently approved by the faculty in the fall and become appendices to the *By-Laws*. Plans are to engage the chairs of all committees in a workshop on developing outcomes after the approval of the operational procedures in the fall. This will bring them on line for the creation of outcomes as defined in the *Plan* and the expected results defined in the outcomes will provide a basis for evaluating committee activities.

Twelve units of the college are in the process of completing an extensive analysis of their operations and activities. Requests for assistance with these two-year reports have been filled. Again, the April 30th deadline provides sufficient leeway for the completion of the reports.

IMPACT ON THE INSTITUTION

Results to date suggests that the college will have sufficient data to document effectiveness or to make recommendations for change in all areas. The major impact on the institution has been campus-wide involvement. As indicated earlier, the *Paine College Comprehensive Assessment and Evaluation Plan*

was developed by a college-wide committee. Further, outcomes are developed and assessed at the unit level. The whole process is facilitated by having a president who is aware of the need to engage in assessment activities and who has served as a leader in the development and implementation of the *Plan*.

Also worth noting is the development of a greater awareness of the need to adopt plans and follow through on defined activities on the part of unit heads in addition to an awareness that the self-study process has changed from a process of extensive evaluation every 10 years to an on-going activity. Last, but not least, improvements in various areas are discussed and acted on as the need arises instead of waiting until an external agency has a scheduled visit or recommends changes or improvements.

The experience of implementing the plan has been challenging while not being overwhelming. Most individuals have cooperated to the fullest extent possible. Since the deadlines that were established are internal, the Committee on Institutional Effectiveness and Research has been very patient with those who have missed them and will evaluate the effect on implementing the *Plan* in the fall.

FORUM HANDOUT

A handout containing the following items will be distributed to session participants at the 1993 Forum.

Presentation Transparencies

AIR paper

Workshop Agenda, 11/19/92: Implementing *The Paine College Comprehensive Assessment and Evaluation Plan*, Development of Educational and Administrative Outcomes with Materials

List on back

Blank copies of Forms IE1 and IE2

Sample 1: Educational Outcome for Philosophy and Religion

Sample 2: Administrative Outcome for Institutional Effectiveness and Research

Evaluation Form (Workshop, 11/19/92)

T³: *Toward Two Thousand, The Paine College Strategic Plan* (BOT, 10/29/92), cover and table of contents

Workshop Agenda, 2/5/93: Writing the Five-Year Evaluation Report

Workshop Agenda, 2/26/93: Development of Committee Operational Procedures/Guidelines

Evaluation Form (Workshop, 2/26/93)

Narrative: *Plan of Operation, Title III - Strengthening HBCU Program, Institutional Effectiveness,*

Evaluation, and Research Activity, October 1, 1992 - September 30, 1993, April 6, 1992

Paine College 1992-1993 Fact Book, cover and table of contents

Resources on assessment, effectiveness and evaluation